Message Text

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72.

ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10

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R 282300Z NOV 73 FM USMISSION USUN NY TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1567 INFO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: NA TAGS: PFOR, UN, PO

SUBJ: LEGAL COMMITTEE: UN CONFERENCE ON PRESCRIPTION

LAW: PORTUGUESE INTERVENTION

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. DURING OTHERWISE LOW-KEY DEBATE ON UNGA LEGAL COMMITTEE NOV. 27 ON FORMULA FOR ISSUING INVITATIONS TO 1974 UN SPONSORED CONFERENCE ON PRESCRIPTION LAW, PORTUGUESE REP DELIVERED LONG SPEECH ATTACKING GUINEA--BISSAU CLAIM TO INDEPENDENCE AND JUSTIFYING PORTUGUESE POLICY IN TERRITORY. PORTUGUESE REP JUSTIFIED INTERVENTION ON GROUNDS ORIGINAL INVITATION FORMULA WOULD HAVE MENTIONED GUINEA--BISSAU BY NAME BUT HE ACKNOWLEDGED ISSUE MOOTED BY FAO'S ADMITTING GUINEA BISSAU TO MEMBERSHIP OVER WEEKEND (THEREBY ENTITLING G-B TO RECEIVE INVITATION AUTOMATICALLY AS MEMBER UN SPEICALIZED AGENCY).

2. PORTUGUESE REP WAS INTERRUPTED ON POINTS OF ORDER BY BULGARIAN, MALIAN AND ALGERIAN DELEGATES. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN (MEXICAN AMB. GONZALEZ GALVEZ) ALLOWED PORTUGUESE REP TO CONTINUE AFTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GENTLY CAUTIONING HIM THAT HIS REMARKS SEEMED OUT OF PLACE

IN STRICTLY PROCEDURAL DEBATE. AFTER PORTUGUESE CONCLUDED, SENEGAL REP DELIVERED BITTER RIGHT OF REPLY. END UNCLASSIFIED

3. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

COMMENT: PORTUGUESE SPEECH WAS CLEARLY OUT OF ORDER SINCE CLOSURE OF DEBATE HAD ALREADY BEEN MOVED. IN ANY CASE, WE CONSIDER IT MOST UNFORTUNATE THAT PORTUGUESE DECIDED TO UTILIZE NORMALLY STAID LEGAL COMMITTEE AS FORUM IN WHICH TO DEFEND THEIR AFRICAN POLICIES AT GREAT LENGTH AND IN PROVOCATIVE TONE. BY SPEAKING OUT OF ORDER AND BY POLITICIZING A TECHNICAL DEBATE, PORTUGUESE GAINED NO SUPPORT FOR THEIR POSITION AND MAY HAVE STRENGTHENED HADN OF THOSE AFRICAN AND ARAB DELEGATES WHO HOPE TO SABOTAGE PROTECTION OF DIPLOMATS CONVENTION (NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION BY COMMITTEE) BY EXEMPTING NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS FROM ITS COVERAGE. END COMMENT: END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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